
Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellows Program

By
Sara Bette Franken
National Defense University

We are creating a coalition to go after terrorism. We are asking the United Nations and every other organization you can think of . . . to join us once and for all in a great coalition to conduct a campaign against terrorists who are conducting war against civilized people.

Colin Powell September 2001

The Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program (RDCTF) was established by the U.S. Congress in 2002 to assist our friends and allies in their efforts in the war on terror by providing training and education for counterterrorism activities. The Regional Defense Counterterrorism Fellowship Program enables the United States Department of Defense to assist key countries in the war on terrorism by providing training and education for counterterrorism activities. The RDCTF program allows the U.S. military through the Assistant Secretary of Defense Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASDSO/LIC) to work with countries of critical importance to the war on terrorism providing non lethal counterterrorism education and training that will have a direct impact on the long term capabilities and the capacity of our friends and allies. Specifically the counter terrorism fellowship will be used to bolster the capacity of friendly foreign nations to detect, monitor, and interdict or disrupt the activities of terrorist networks.

Regional combatant commands recommend (via the Joint Staff) individuals for consideration. ASDSO/LIC oversees the creation of a mixture of mobile and resident institutional courses tailored to meet defined goals and to the specific need of key countries, and which will advance broader U.S. government counterterrorism objectives. Key senior and mid-level military officials are given the tools to effectively build, manage, and sustain counterterrorism programs. All candidates are thoroughly vetted consistent with legal requirements regarding human rights issues.

Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict looks to the National Defense University (NDU) School for National Security Executive Education (SNSEE) as the centerpiece of its Counterterrorism Fellowship Program. The School for National Security Executive Education's Counterterrorism Fellowship academic program puts international counterterrorism specialists in graduate seminars with American students from throughout the national capital region, representing the military services, Department of Defense agencies, executive departments, and Congressional staffs. Participants in these, multi-service, multi-agency, multi-national classrooms encounter real world obstacles to jointness in a combined policy setting. As they develop strategies and insights to cope with those challenges they develop the leadership skills for a 21st century war that knows no middle ground between parochial failure and joint victory. In keeping with the National Defense University tradition, each SNSEE seminar is oriented from the strategic level where shared purpose gives focus to disparate viewpoints.

The educational experience is further enriched for counterterrorism fellows, who participate in focused week long programs delivered by SNSEE's RDCTF partners



from the Defense Institute for International Legal Studies (DIILS), the Joint Special Operations University (JSOU), and the National Interagency Civil-Military Institute (NICI). This exposure across the SO/LIC counterterrorism community, paired with SNSEE's joint academic seminars, gives counterterrorism fellows a solid grounding in the practical and well as the intellectual side of the war on terrorism. Students take four courses per semester, one of which is an elective. Successful completion of the program earns an NDU Counterterrorism Fellowship Certificate in National Security Studies. Students whose academic background, English language skills, and academic performance meet NDU standards may also receive up to twenty-four graduate credits.

Information Resource Management College-Advanced Management Program

Every year an increasing number of international officers attend the Advanced Management Program (AMP) at the Information Resource Management College (IRMC). AMP is a fourteen-week graduate-level program that provides information resource managers with an integrated understanding of policies, legislation, and recent acquisition reforms. Graduates are able to form effective managerial partnerships to effectively justify, allocate, and apply information resources to mission requirements in compliance with regulatory, policy, and ethical standards.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization Staff Officer Orientation Course

One international student per course or about six students per year attend the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Staff Officer Orientation course (NSOOC). This is a two-week resident course with a two-phased approach. The first phase consists of intensive instruction in the following subject areas:

- The Washington Treaty;
- NATO Headquarters Organization;
- The NATO Integrated Military Command Structure;
- Logistics and Standardization;
- The Alliance's Strategic Concept; and
- The NATO Staff Environment.

The second phase provides a unique opportunity for discussion with senior U.S., allied, and Partnership for Peace guest speakers, including representatives from the Joint Staff, Office of Secretary of Defense, Department of State, the intelligence community, capitol hill, military attachés, senior flag and general officers and diplomats with current or recent NATO experience.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization Staff Officer Orientation course's two-week program is designed specifically for U.S. field grade officers en route to NATO assignments. The objective of the course is to enable the staff officer to become immediately effective in the NATO staff environment. The course is also open to officers; senior non-commissioned officers and civilians assigned to the Department of Defense or other U.S. government agencies dealing with issues related to NATO and/or European security. The student becomes conversant with NATO terminology; NATO organization and functions; political, economic, and intercultural aspects of the alliance; and international staff work.

Reserve Component National Security Course

Every year two to three international students attend the Reserve Component National Security Course (RCNSC) at NDU. This course is conducted for senior officers of the reserve components, selected civilians who work in the field of mobilization preparedness, and reserve officers selected from foreign military services. The course is a synthesis of educational components from the National War College, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, Institute for National Strategic Studies, Joint Forces Staff College, and Information Resources Management College. The course aims at increasing the student's awareness of the national security process.

The curriculum consists of lectures, seminars, and presentations dealing with national security policy and defense resource management, presented by faculty members of the National Defense

University and distinguished guest speakers. Emphasis is placed on national and world environments and their influence on national security, including political factors, economic conditions and trends, resources, force management, and information management.

About the Author

Sara M. Franken, formerly the Chief of the International Student Office at the U.S. Army, John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg North Carolina, brings over fourteen years experience in international military training to the RDCT program.